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Ham Radio Transcends Time and Space

by SUSAN LARSON

COVER

Buzz Kutcher (K3GWK) operates his portable ham radio station during the annual ARRL Simulated Emergency Test in 2010.

It's 2016. We can all text and tweet. So, why would anyone still use a method of communication that employs late nineteenth century technology?

Buzz Kutcher, president of the Butts County Emergency Communications Auxiliary and known by call sign K3GWK, says the answer is simple.

"When all else fails, ham radio works," Kutcher said. "After Hurricane Katrina, ham radio was often the only way people could communicate. During the Joplin, MO tornadoes, communications from the

continued on page 7

March 2016
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10 Signs your aging parent can't live alone

Special to Senior News

Submitted by Stephanie Fisher

It's a sad reality that, as we age, we become less independent than we once were – but for most blessed with longevity, it's inevitable. With multiple millions of baby boomers throughout the U.S. caring for elderly parents, throngs of adult caregivers struggle with determining if their parent is fit to remain living alone. It's a difficult, multi-faceted decision not to be made lightly as there is much at stake—both the physical and emotional well-being of the parent in question and for the extended family at large.

To help ease the process of determining if an elderly parent should no longer live on their own, here are 10 tell-tale signs that can give you better peace of mind with making this all-important decision as offered by aging and elder care authority and legislation advocate, Carolyn A. Brent, MBA – award-winning author of the acclaimed title, “*Why Wait? The Baby Boomers' Guide to Preparing Emotionally, Financially Legally for a Parents' Death*” – a book that helps caregivers discern, discuss and deal with crucial end-of-life issues within their families (www.CareGiverStory.com).

Mom or Dad has always been a great housekeeper, but the house just doesn't look like it used to: You may remember a parent who was constantly on you about tidying your room or putting things away after you were done

with them. The house was always spotless and everything was organized, clean and in its place. There was much pride in this fact. However, upon visiting with Mom or Dad today the home is decidedly cluttered and not nearly as clean as normal. Of course, this can mean a lot of things. Your parent may actually have an active social life and is more concerned with staying busy than tidying up. But, it could be a more ominous sign that your parent is having a difficult time keeping up with all the chores. She may feel overwhelmed or his physical health is slowing him down. Ask your parent if help is needed with the clutter, but do it in a nonchalant way that could prompt a conversation indicating assistance is needed here. Keep a keen eye to discern if the clutter and filth is getting worse with each visit – it's often a key sign.

The bills and other mail are piling up: While we all get busy – even those who are retired – basic tasks that were often dealt with quickly and easily when younger, but that are now falling by the wayside, is a sign that your older parent could be getting overwhelmed and not able to manage their daily affairs. This may also indicate some signs of forgetfulness and memory issues. Often, especially if a parent is alone without a spouse, they may not have someone to remind them to go through the mail and check to see if it's time to pay certain bills.

The checking account balance is wrong and bills are going unpaid: If the mail, with bills included, is piling

up, there is a good chance that the bills are not getting paid. You may also discover amongst mail issues that your parent's checking account ledger balance is wrong or in arrears. These are also signs that your parent is having memory issues or difficulty with simple math cognition. It can also indicate a general apathy – a mindset that can be equally problematic for someone with the glut of responsibility required to effectively live alone.

Your parent is losing a lot of weight: A parent who may have lost their partner or who is generally depressed often loses interest in eating due to a reduced appetite. They may feel that it is not worth the hassle of shopping for and preparing meals if they are now living all alone. Accordingly, pay close attention to your parent's weight. Also, check their refrigerator and pantry to see if there is an appropriate supply of food and that what is there is fresh and edible. If the cupboard is bare and your parent's frame is shrinking, living alone might become problematic. At the very least, you may want to think about bringing groceries by or looking into a service that offers prepared meal delivery. Otherwise, you may have to think about putting them somewhere that helps them eat regular, healthy meals.

They have forgotten the basics of hygiene: If you notice that your parent is wearing the same clothing day in and day out or that their hair or skin appears dirty on a fairly regular basis, they may have lost the motivation, ability and/or forethought to look after them self. Living alone, they may feel like they don't have to dress up or clean up for anyone. Worse yet, they may have forgotten – or simply no longer cares – that such personal hygiene and cleanliness is an important part of daily living and maintaining one's good health.

They appear in inappropriate clothing: While you may not share your mother or father's sense of style, there is cause for concern if your parent dons summer clothing in the dead of winter or leaves the house in a nightgown and slippers for a trip to the store. This often happens when the elderly are suffering from confusion and lose the ability to have discretion in social situations. In this situation, wardrobe can be the least of the concerns as the problem manifests in other dangerous ways.

There are signs of forgetfulness in the home: Confusion can also show up in the kitchen and can prove to be deadly if not dealt with quickly. All too often there are stories of older people who accidentally burned their houses down because they left a pot on the stove for hours and fell asleep or have flooded the home when they forgot to turn off the tap. Or, perhaps more subtly, the milk is in the pantry and the bread is in the refrigerator. These are all tell-tale signs that it may not be wise for your parent to be left home alone for extended periods of time.

Your parent regularly misses appointments and other important items: Forgetfulness, absentmindedness and memory issues may also show up when it comes to keeping certain appointments, recognizing key dates, or, even more importantly, maintaining medication dosages on schedule. This is a clear sign they need to live with someone who can help them stick to their schedules and stay on task.

They are just acting plain weird: This is always the sign that families dread the most. No one wants to turn into the “crazy cat lady” or the “man who mutters to himself.” But, unfortunately, between aging, mental degradation and the side effects from medication, you may note that your parent has lost their personalities and behavior has taken an odd turn for the worse. If you see signs of paranoia, fear, strange phone calls and conversations and nervousness, this should not be overlooked as it's a blatant sign that living assistance is in order.

They exhibit signs of depression: There are a number of classic signs that can be connected with someone suffering depression. A loss of interest in caring for one's self as well as a lack of participation in socialization and in once-loved hobbies can mean that your parent needs treatment or should reside in an environment where they can be around other people. Sometimes, depression comes from a sense of loneliness or the realization that they can no longer do things for themselves. Putting them somewhere that offers assistance, socialization and activities can help cure the loneliness and put them back on track to a more fulfilling, active and engaged life.



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Being Led Down the Garden Path

by SUSAN LARSON

"My 90th birthday's coming up next week and as far as I can tell, I'm the oldest person in the neighborhood. Do I get a prize for that?" Mrs. Grindle asked over the phone.

We'd just moved in a few months earlier and I'd been drafted as president of the women's club. You know the old line — they needed new blood.

For this, I drew on some of the old blood, a former president, who agreed to put a balloon on Mrs. Grindle's mailbox and buy the elderly lady a prize.

When the birthday girl called to thank me she said, "Do you need groundcover? I have lots of Dusty Miller. You can have as much as you want."

Our yard was pretty bare, so I took her up on her offer. When I got there, she said, "Please call me Pat. It makes me feel old to have someone your age call me Mrs. Grindle."

"Treating someone your age like a peer makes me feel old," I said.

"Maybe so, but you won't win any prize for it!" she retorted.

I planted the soft aqua sprigs around the day lilies my neighbor Marge had given me. They soon took over the hillside outside our dining room window.

Marge, a master gardener, said, "I've never seen Dusty Miller that looks like that. It must be a rare variety."

After a few years, our budget loos-

ened up enough that we could focus on our interior decor. When I looked for dining room wallpaper, the first sample I turned to had a muted aqua background with soft orange tiger lilies. Kind of like a Monet version of my flowerbed. It was a bit more than I wanted to spend. But then, how many people manage to find wallpaper to match their landscaping?

The following spring, the Dusty Miller had spread beyond belief.

"I looked in all my gardening books," Marge said. "There's no variety of Dusty Miller that comes back every year like that. But whatever it is, it sure looks nice with your wallpaper."

Time passed. I saw an estate sale at Pat's house. Her daughter Linda welcomed me inside. I told her how special her mother had been to me and how blessed I felt to have some of her Dusty Miller.

"You mean that stuff out back?" Linda asked, scrunching her nose, then laughing. "Susan, that's a weed. Mother told people it was Dusty Miller and said they could take all they want since it was the only way she knew to keep the stuff under control."

If anyone out there knew and loved Pat as much as I did, and would like a little something to remember her by, I have a yard full of her Dusty Miller.

You can take as much as you want.

Susan Larson is a writer from Lilburn. E-mail her at susanlarson79@gmail.com.

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Poets' Corner

Editor's Note: If you have written a "well-worked" poem which you would like considered for publication, please email it to seniornewsga@cox.net or mail it to Senior News, 214 Wilsons Creek Bend, Bonaire, GA 31005. Please include your name and address on your poem. We will publish selected poems (or excerpts) as space permits.

THE CAREGIVER TREASURE

by Norman Drummond

*Here comes Betty walking near me,
Here comes Thomas, there sits John,
Anne, and Alfred, Margie, Elsie,
Seeing them, though they're all gone.*

*Life provides an endless mixture,
Scenes scroll like a movie show,
Watching reels of old, old pictures,
Mem'ries etched on heart and soul.*

*Moving on, though ne'er erasing;
Living in the now instead.
Other elders daily tracing
Precious scenes inside my head.*

*Can the heart be over loaded,
Reach a point too full to care?
At the brim and running over –
No more space for mem'ries there?*

*Do our chests have their own
measure?
Lord, when cups fill up to brims,
Make them so to hold more
treasures –
Precious jewels and sparkling gems.*

MY ROOM

by Beverly Bryson Norton

*My room is cheerful and bright as
the sun peaks through my window
in the early morning light;*

*Outside my window stands a tree
sturdy and tall, and I watch it
change with the seasons for a
special delight;*

*Winter brings tiny snowflakes or ice
that light up and sparkle like a
Christmas Tree at night;*

*The other seasons bring the buds,
leaves and flowers that become a
welcome sight after the long
winter's plight;*

*Beyond the tree, a gazebo stands
like a white edifice magnificent
and tall as the vines and flowers
entwine throughout the walls; this*

*is a restful place to enjoy where
one can sit, meditate and dream;*

*This is not all I see as the waterfall
comes into view;*

*The birds gather to drink and take
a bath as they flutter their wings
and chirp and sing;*

*With the bird houses so close by,
I can always watch the colorful
birds in this lovely scene;*

*My room becomes a happy place
as I try to remember the past,
but I find joy in watching these
everyday things.*

Giving... The Anatomy of Stewardship

by DANIEL W. GATLYN, USN
Ret.

Minister/Journalist

Biblical Stewardship is all about the personal extension of time, talent, and substance; as opposed to a selfish embrace of volumes, victory, and values! "Giving" should be the common denominator of those who have been redeemed – an automatic feature if you will – of those who's lives have been miraculously changed! The vessel who has been touched by "the Master" should forever abandon the role of "isolationist," to take on the new stature of "bonded servant!" Giving of one's self, to the credible work of God; and, to aid the plight of those less fortunate, is central in Scripture... and essential to the maturity of a saint!

Do be reminded, that we should place our donations wisely – for many are scandalous in handling of funds! (Google your Charitable Organizations for statistics.) The liberal scattering of one's goods and reputation is explained in various tones! Consider the following!

Giving is "Reciprocal!" What goes around, comes around! "Give and it shall be given, pressed down, shaken together, and running over!" Such is the process attached by Biblical verse! (Luke 6:38)

It is also a law of "natural manner" that defies neutrality! It will happen! Every day of the week, and every week of the year, what goes out will return multiplied!

That is the central commentary of "seed!" Consider for a moment the stalk of corn! One grain is responsible for ears; and, each ear contains scores of

seeds! This is precisely the principle carried forth! It is unalterable! Our Giving should be directed toward "the Mission" (The Church as applicable); and, toward humanity!

Giving is also "Provisional" – in that conditions are set! If you be willing and obedient you shall eat of the good of the land! (Is. 1:19)

There is a "big If" in every promise of God! And while He could, God does not normally move unilaterally! His promise is based on a provision! You cannot expect God (or man) to respond to "nothingness!" It does not happen! The equation waits on the individual to become involved! You will not harvest grain (or anything else) unless grain is sown! No rabbits out of the hat... just plain common sense and direction!

Giving is thirdly, Commendatory! Your participation in supporting the work of God, and the "poverties of men," is observed and commended in every instance! Thanksgiving and celebration indicates that you have observed the reasons for contribution; and, are willing to become a part!

It means you have recognized both the admonition and the promise surrounding the effort! Read Malachi 3 carefully!

We should be cheerful givers! It is both obligation and privilege! I would not go a day without sharing of Tithes, Offerings, and Gifts – all of which are commanded, and expected! In fact, it so profitable to becoming involved, that twenty percent is not a burden... but a celebration!

The Lord distinctly invites you to "prove Him! (Malachi 3:10) Want to be solvent? Start your Giving today!



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Kettle Creek Battlefield visited by Philadelphia Winn Chapter NSDAR

Submitted by Lee Schermerhorn
Chairman, Philadelphia Winn
Chapter, Publicity and Media

Elizabeth Jaeger contributed to
this article. Frank Marchese, pho-
tographer.

On Saturday, February 13, the Georgia Society Sons of the American Revolution celebrated the 237th anniversary of the Battle of Kettle Creek. Kettle Creek Battlefield is located in Wilkes County, Georgia. One of the most important battles of the American Revolutionary War was fought at Kettle Creek on February 14, 1779. The ceremony marked the observance of the Revolutionary War battle that was called by Colonel Andrew Pickens, "the severest check and chastisement the Tories ever received in South Carolina and Georgia."

Located just outside of Washington, Georgia, Kettle Creek Battlefield was purchased by the Daughters of the American

Revolution in 1900 with hopes of developing it as a historic site. Today, the battlefield is listed on the National Register of Historic Places (1975) and features monuments dating back to 1930. A picnic area atop "War Hill" and several hiking trails now welcome guests daily. The Kettle Creek Battlefield Association has been actively pursuing plans to transition the property into a full-scale historical and recreational park since 2011. Each February the site hosts history aficionados from throughout the country at Revolutionary Days with a parade, battle re-enactments, and pageantry. Special guided tours can be arranged for group visits.

The Philadelphia Winn Chapter NSDAR, led by Regent Lydia McGill, attended the ceremony and laid a beautiful wreath in honor of those patriots who sacrificed their lives and fortunes for liberty.

In attendance were Regent Lydia McGill, First Vice Regent Kitty Watters, Tiffany Rainey, Anne Lockhart, Registrar Elizabeth Jaeger, and Valerie Craft who attended on Friday and toured the battlefield. Also

in attendance were HODARS (husbands of DAR) Curtis McGill, Sid Watters, Frank Marchese, and Karl Jaeger as well as the Jaeger children, Alex and Sam.

For more information regarding the Philadelphia Winn Chapter of the NSDAR, please visit our website at: philadelphiawinn.georgiastatedar.org.



Regent Lydia McGill with Honor Guard



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Young-at-Heart Artist Among Nation's Top Artisans at the American Craft Show

Special to *Senior News*

Thousands of fine craft lovers and collectors come far and wide to enjoy the breathtaking presentations at the annual American Craft Show in Atlanta. With over 225 of the country's best contemporary craft makers under one roof, show-goers enjoy shopping one-of-a-kind quality crafts in jewelry, clothing, furniture and home décor while meeting and interacting with the artists behind the intricate work.

This year Bill Moore, a vibrantly young-at-heart 84 year-

old woodworker from Canton, will join the other 225 nationally acclaimed craft artisans in the Southeast's largest indoor craft show. He has been selected for the first time into the highly competitive, juried show for his stunning handmade one-of-a-kind furniture. Mr. Moore is a true testimony that you are never too old to reach your full potential with his heartwarming story about how much joy he garners while creating his handcrafted wood objects. It all started in 1944 in a seventh grade industrial arts class, and now having made hundreds of pieces of furniture, he has had a

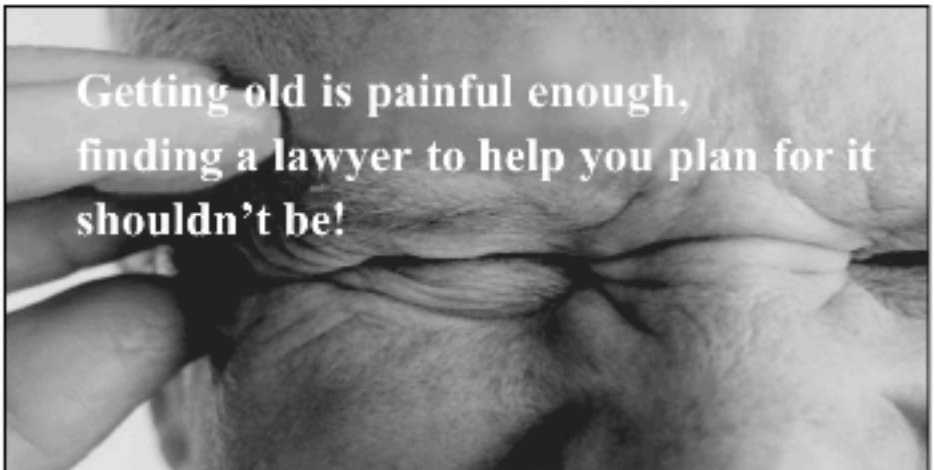
"love affair" with wood to this day.

The show also features interactive components that offer something for everyone. Style Slam debuts this year, featuring several of Atlanta's most savvy stylists, who will pair up with fashion wearable, accessory and jewelry artists to create cutting-edge fashion ensembles that will be showcased throughout the show floor. For the entire family,

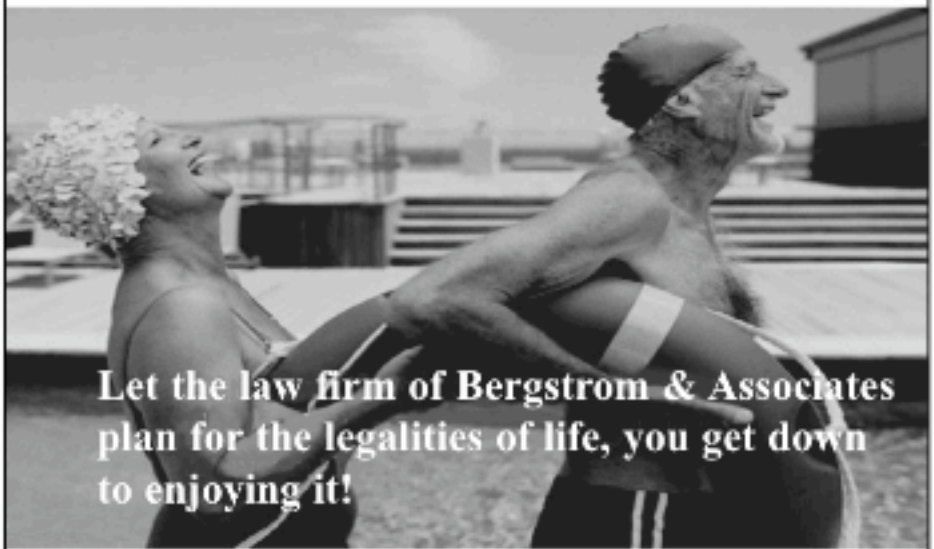
the Let's Make Inspiration Stations include dozens of local artisans, from Callanwolde Fine Arts Center to Preserving Place, who actively demonstrate the making of their foods and hand crafts, allowing show-goers to take part in the hands-on process. The 3-day Craft Show returns for its 27th year to the Cobb Galleria Center, March 11-13. For tickets and information visit www.craft-council.org/atlanta.



Distressed Black Walnut



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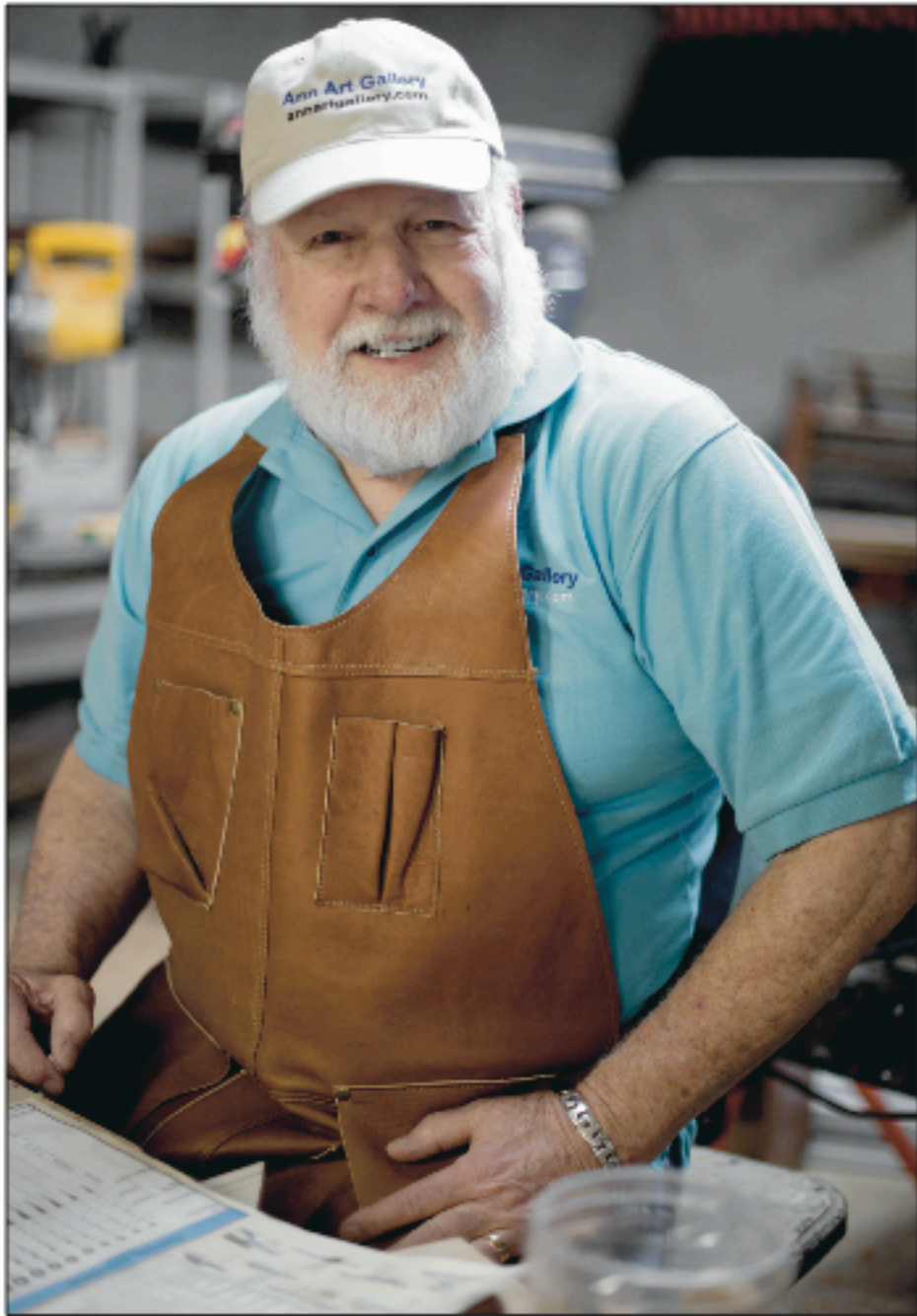


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Ham Radio from cover page

heavily damaged hospital were through ham radio. The emergency manager for the hospital said, after the event, "I regret not calling my hams in sooner."

"In disasters, members of Amateur Radio Emergency Services are often the first to respond to provide communication. Our ARES team can backup the Butts County communications system with digital data and voice from the 911 center and also from a ham station at Sylvan Grove Hospital. In Butts County our Emergency Communication group is part of the CERT program and the Butts County Office of Homeland Security/Emergency Management Agency. We get great support from both the county and the hospital."

"Craig Fugate, FEMA Director, said in a recent speech – "When you need ham radio you really need ham radio." We are a back-up to the back-up. No infrastructure required!"

While many think of ham radio as something hobbyists did in their basements back in the fifties, they aren't wrong about that. It's just that today, in the 21st century, people of

all ages are hamming it up in all walks of life all around the world. There are more than 2.7 million hams worldwide with over 772,400 licensed hams in the U.S. and nearly 20,000 in Georgia.

"Our youngest member was 11 when she passed her Technician test. In our group we have members who have been licensed since the 50's," said Kutcher, who acquired his license in 1971 while serving in the Coast Guard.

"Our group holds a HamCram license class twice a year and six license testing sessions a year. Many of our new members comment that ham radio is something they have always wanted to do but the Morse code, job, family, other hobbies, etc. kept them away. The Morse code requirement was removed by the FCC in 2007. Our group was formed to "Elmer" (mentor) new hams and we are very proud of our membership. Most have advanced to higher class licenses: General and Extra Class."

Even with a computer in every home, a cell phone in every pocket and a GPS in every car, Kutcher, who has won several awards for his expertise, said ham radio technology is more valuable than ever.



Mike Crowe (AJ4GU) prepares parts for an antenna building tech session.



Darlene Ragon (KK4BKF) and David Burnham (AK4EM) operating at our club's first Field Day in 2012.

"Many improvements in technology have been made by engineers and scientists who are Amateur Radio operators including George Sweigert a pioneer in mobile phone technology, Jack Kilby known for the Texas Instrument micro-chip, Dr. Joe Taylor 1993 Nobel Prize winner and Percy Spencer, inventor of the microwave oven," he said. "We have hams who regularly contact astronauts and cosmonauts, including digital messaging and television. There

is even a ham station on the International Space Station."

To follow the airwaves that have transcended three centuries as the broadest and most powerful wireless communications capability available to any private citizen anywhere in the world, visit www.bcgaares.org or e-mail wx4bca@arrl.net.

Susan Larson is a writer from Lilburn. E-mail her at susanlarson79@gmail.com.



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Out & About

Philadelphia Winn Chapter NSDAR visits Chateau Elan in Braselton

Submitted by Lee Schermerhorn
Chairman, Philadelphia Winn
Chapter, Publicity and Media

The Philadelphia Winn Chapter National Society Daughters of the American Revolution, visited Chateau Elan in Braselton, GA on Friday, January 29th. Seventeen DAR Daughters and guests attended.

The group, plus one HODAR (husband of DAR), enjoyed a winery tour where they learned about various wines, grapes and the process of making wine! After their tour, a sumptuous lunch was enjoyed in the Chateau Elan Café. Philadelphia Winn Chapter plans a monthly outing for member-

ship and their guests. The venues incorporate the founding principles of the NSDAR: historic preservation, patriotism and education. Though located in the North Georgia foothills, patrons feel as if they've visited the French countryside with some warm, Southern hospitality included!

Chateau Elan is situated on 3,500 acres just 30 minutes from Atlanta. It is the vision and fulfilled dream of Nancy and Donald Panoz. With their many accomplishments in the business world, they maintain that their greatest joy is their family including five children and 10 grandchildren!

For more information regarding the Philadelphia Winn Chapter of the NSDAR, please visit our website at: philadelphiawinn.georgiastatedar.org.



Front Row: Librarian Randi Minor, Regent Lydia McGill, Helen Grigsby & Oliver, Mary Ann Owens. Second Row: Renee Weilbrenner, Pat Davis, Joyceline Cruz, Janet Perry. Third Row: Second Vice Regent Ann Story, Barbara McCay, Joyce Howard, Margaret Peddle. Fourth Row: Lee Schermerhorn, Carolyn Holley, HODAR Frank Marchese, Anne Lockhart.

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Special to Senior News

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DENOMINATIONS IN THIS AREA, TO GATHER FOR FELLOWSHIP, TO LEARN, AND TO SHARE A NOON MEAL. Seniors from Mountain Park UMC, Snellville UMC, Tucker UMC, and Harmony Grove UMC have planned this popular day.

The day begins at 8:45 a.m. for late registration, coffee and light refreshments in the Family Life Center. This is followed by SEVEN INFORMATIVE/ENTERTAINING INTEREST GROUPS in the Sanctuary. Each person may select two Interest Groups. Lunch follows Interest Groups.

The day ends with our entertainment by special guest, Kathy Beer, graduate from the University of Alabama with a degree in music education. Since

2006 Kathy has played the piano at the international food court in the Atlanta Airport.

The day should end by 2 p.m. immediately following the drawing for door prizes.

Registration fee is \$15. This includes morning coffee and light refreshments as well as lunch. Send your check to Darla From, XYZ Treasurer, Snellville United Methodist Church, 2428 Main Street East, Snellville, GA 30078.

For more information, call Aggie Calder at 770-921-8631; Jane McCombs at 770-939-0083; Betty Banks at 770-972-9499; Mary Thornhill at 770-921-0629; or, Gaila Raines at 770-266-0209.



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Mayberry Moments

THE FUN OF MAYBERRYÉITÔS COMING TO YOUR TOWN!

Special to *Senior News*

Happiness is a journey, not a destination.

Do you miss the simpler life? Do you ever wish life was more like Mayberry with Barney, Andy, and Opie enjoying a lazy day down by the pond fishing, laughing, and having fun with their friends? If you are a fan of the Andy Griffith Show you will not want to miss the opportunity to have an Evening in Mayberry with your friends The Mayberry Deputy, musical memories from members of "The Darling Family," and enjoy the experience of characters from the town of Mayberry and days gone by in a family friendly atmosphere.

You will be transported back in time with the Mayberry Deputy:

"The Mayberry Deputy" is the most noted of David Brownings characters and started in 1988 when a friend of Browning hired the Dillards, known to watchers of "The Andy Griffith Show" as the "Darling boys," to play bluegrass music in Bristol, Tennessee. Browning, who started out in community theatre, put together a "Barney Fife" type act based on a sense of recall (since Browning has seen all the Mayberry shows at one time or another) which made that first performance a hit. At that time, he discovered that he could make a statement as David Browning that was not funny at all but the same statement made in uniform as "The Mayberry Deputy" had audiences falling out of their seats.

Browning thinks people enjoy

the "Fife" character because it reminds them of a time gone by. "The character is funny and it's clean entertainment. In the world we live in today, people are searching for their own Mayberry," he says. "I value this character for what it gives to people today. Laughter and memories." As a minister with the Baptist Ministerial Association told Browning, "You are ministering to people with your corny jokes and clean humor."

Take a musical journey with Rodney Dillard and The Dillard Band (aka The Darling Family): In 1962, THE DILLARDS, who had a new recording contract with Elektra Records, were asked by the producers of The Andy Griffith Show to play a bluegrass-playing family (The Darlings), whose patriarch was to be played by popular Hollywood actor Denver Pyle. And to this day THE DILLARDS are seen nearly every day somewhere in the world thanks to the still enormous popularity of The Andy Griffith Show re-runs.

And last but certainly not least, visit with Maggie Patterson who played Charlene Darling on The Andy Griffith Show.

On March 12 and 13 you will be entertained by all of the above in a show now called Mayberry Moments. Sure to be a big hit for Playhouse audiences, please make your plans to see this one. Great for

entire family.

MAYBERRY MomentsÉITÔS COMING to Cumming Playhouse!
March 12,13, 2016... Sat, 8 p.m. ,

Sun, 3 p.m.; Tickets \$25.00 & \$30.00 plus Ga tax. Tickets information: 770-781-9178. Cumming Playhouse, 101 School Street, Cumming, GA 30040.

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Athens Y Camps celebrates 118th Year

Special to *Senior News*

Athens Y Camps, located in Beautiful Tallulah Falls Georgia, celebrates it 118th Year of Camp.

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The Next Chapter

Book Recommendations
by ANNE B. JONES, PhD

- *The Secret Chord: A Novel*; Geraldine Brooks, Viking (2015)
- *My Name is Lucy Barton*; Elizabeth Strout, Random House, 2016

Considered one of our best contemporary writers, former war correspondent Geraldine Brooks is a master wordsmith and researcher, known for “bringing the past alive.” Although she has written three non-fiction works, she is best known for her historical fiction. Most notable are her Pulitzer prize-winning love story *March and People of the Book*, a novel tracing the journey of the 15th century manuscript Sarajevo Haggadah.

Her latest release, *The Secret Chord*, is about the life of Israel’s King David as seen by the prophet Nathan. One of the Bible’s most interesting characters, David is thought to be the author of most of the Book of Psalms. The story of his winning battle against Goliath is popular with children and adults and he is believed to be an ancestor of Christ. A multi-

dimensional personality, his life was filled with triumphs, failures and contradictions. He began as a shepherd boy, was a harpist, composer, poet and singer who became a heroic warrior before becoming king.

Brooks is a skillful character builder and David is well portrayed. She focuses on his humanity while exposing his flaws and his strengths. *The Secret Chord* is an engrossing work of well-written literature that keeps readers riveted.

Another master of her craft, Elizabeth Strout, is best known for her Pulitzer prize-winning novel, *Olive Kitteridge*. Her newest book, *My Name is Lucy Barton*, is made powerful through its simplicity. The story revolves around a woman who has been hospitalized after surgery and is visited by her mother, from whom she is alienated and has not seen in many years.

Memories are revisited as the two begin to talk, revealing old wounds and reminding Lucy of the dysfunctional and abusive family of her youth, a life from which she had desperately tried to escape. Issues brought to light include the complexities of her love for her daughters, her mar-

riage, her relationship with her husband and her desire to become a writer.

Newsday’s Marion Winik describes the work as “A short novel about love, particularly the complicated love between mothers and daughters, but also simpler, more sudden bonds... It evokes these connections in a style so spare, so pure and so

profound the book almost seems to be a kind of scripture or sutra, if a very down-to-earth and unpretentious one.”

You may contact Anne at annebjones@msn.com... (*Tides of Fear, Gold Thunder, A Light on Peachtree, All Around the Track, Brave at Heart*).

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American Craft Show in Atlanta Features Nation's Top Craft Artists

The American Craft Show at the Cobb Galleria Center, March 11-13, 2016 is a three-day celebration of all things handmade. The Southeast's largest juried indoor craft show brings together over 225 of the country's most talented contemporary craft makers. Considered to be a premiere marketplace, fine craft lovers and collectors shop one-of-a-kind, quality crafts in jewelry, clothing, furniture and home décor, all under one roof. This year, fashion takes center stage with the debut of the Style Slam exhibit.

WHERE: American Craft Show; March 11-13, 2016; Cobb Galleria Centre, Two Galleria Parkway, Atlanta, Georgia 30339

WHEN: Friday, March 11, 2016 from 10am – 8pm;
Saturday, March 12, 2016 from 10am – 6pm; Sunday,
March 13, 2016 from 11am – 5pm

TICKETS: On-site Admission: \$13 one-day pass; Advance Tickets Online: \$12 one-day pass; Join American Craft Council for \$40 and be admitted free! \$5 after 5pm Friday night on-site purchases only. Admission is FREE for American Craft Council members and children 12 and under.

For information and to purchase tickets: www.craftcouncil.org/atlanta; Tel. 612-206-3104.

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Taking Care

One size doesn't fit all caregivers!

by LISA M. PETSCHÉ

Much is written about caring for aging relatives, offering general advice and specific tips to family caregivers. It may all sound good, but for any particular caregiver, some ideas will ultimately be more helpful than others. That's because, although caregivers face many similar challenges, no two caregiving situations are alike.



Lisa Petsché

Numerous factors account for the differences among caregivers, experiences.

Caregiving Variables

- **Interpersonal issues:** The nature and history of the caregiver's relationship with their relative plays a key role in how caregiving unfolds. If personalities, habits, expectations or values clash, the caregiver is likely to experience more stress than the average person in that role.

- **Caregiver's health:** If they have physical or mental health challenges, caregiving is likely to be experienced as more difficult. Even if their health is initially good, this may change over time, especially if caregiving is prolonged, intense or marked by complications and crises.

- **Timing:** Since some stages of life involve more responsibilities than others, the timing of the caregiving journey has a major impact on caregiver burden and coping. Caring for an older relative can be especially challenging when the caregiver is looking after multiple relatives, raising their own family or employed, especially in a demanding type of work. If more than one of these applies, caregiver stress is further multiplied.

- **Care receiver's needs:** The more

physical and mental limitations a care receiver has, the more time, energy and skills are required of the caregiver to meet the person's needs. The extent to which the care receiver's health is stable is another significant variable in caregiver coping. Stress can also be higher when the relative has multiple major medical diagnoses – for example, Alzheimer's disease and cancer.

- **Available supports:** Caregiving is not meant to be a one-person job, but in some cases, the primary caregiver may be the only caregiver, which puts them at a high risk for burnout. Ideally, other family members pitch in and regularly give the caregiver a break; however, for various reasons this does not always happen. Community resources also help to support and supplement a caregiver's efforts, but the availability of such resources varies from one community to the next, as does the cost.

- **Finances:** If the caregiver or care receiver can afford the financial cost of home renovations, medical equipment and private healthcare services as needed, this is likely to make caregiving safer and less stressful. And if the cost of a regular vacation for the caregiver and concomitant respite care for their relative is feasible, this can go a long way towards keeping the caregiver healthy in body, mind and soul.

- **Expectations:** Sometimes a caregiver can be their own worst enemy, expecting too much of themselves or the person for whom they are caring.

Care receivers, too, vary in their expectations – regarding caregiver availability, privacy (if they live together), outside help (whether or not they will accept it) and financial arrangements (who pays for what), among other things.

Cultural factors may also play a role. For example, in some cultures it's expected that elders will be cared for in the home of one of their children until their death. Consequently, arranging long-term care in a residential facility tends to be perceived as shirking of one's familial responsibilities and the

caregiver judged harshly by those close to them.

Such an expectation can place undue pressure on a caregiver who feels stretched to their limit and is wearing down.

Words of Wisdom

If you are a caregiver, try not to compare yourself with others in this role. Their circumstances are likely to be different, although it may not be evident from where you sit.

When you come across caregiving advice, no matter what the source, know that it won't always be applicable because, in some ways, your situation is unique.

Ultimately, you need to do what works for you and feels right.

Lisa M. Petsché is a social worker and a freelance writer specializing in boomer and senior health matters. She has personal and professional experience with elder care.

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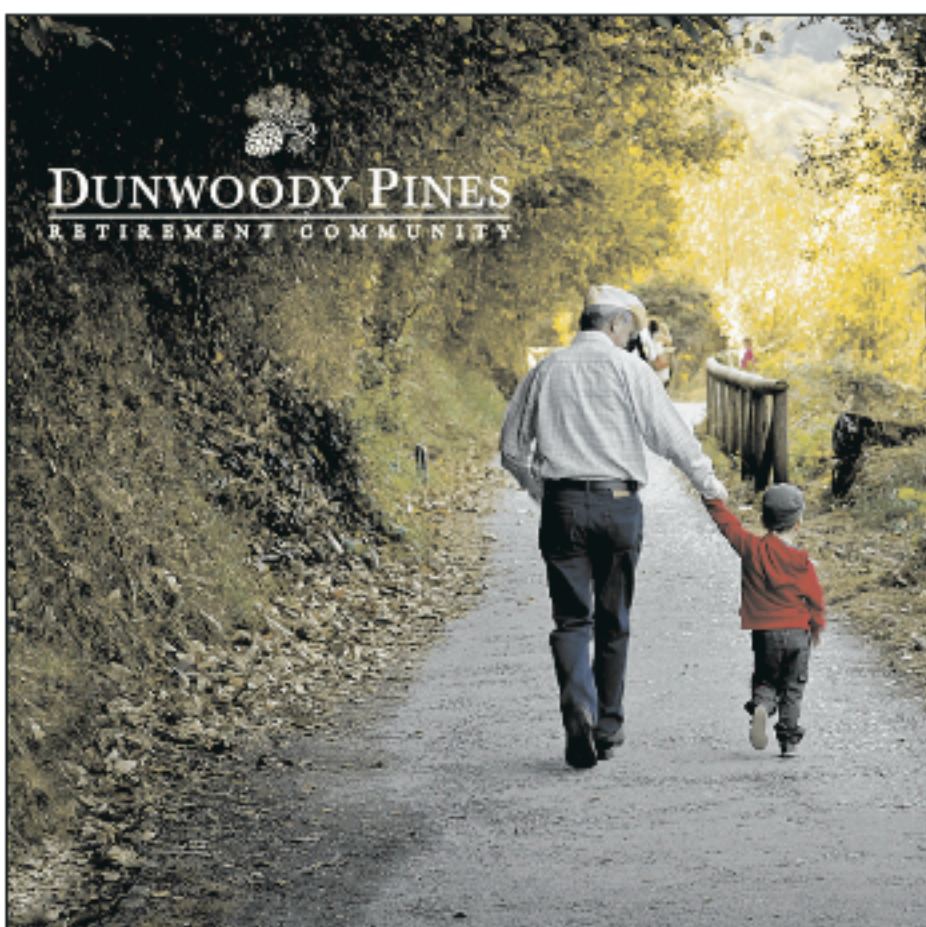
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Phoenix Players Bring Laughs to Seniors

The Phoenix Players, a senior drama group that delights audiences with free performances will be playing on March 24, 3 pm, at Cohen Home; March 31, 12 noon, at St. Mark Lutheran Church; April 7, 11 am, at Clairmont Place; April 14, 10:30 am, at Delmar Gardens of Gwinnett; April 21 at Ivy Hall; April 27, 2:30 pm, at Wesley Woods; and, May 4, 2pm, at Kingsbridge. There are three opening left in May. To book a performance, or to get in on the act for next season, contact Carolyn Erling at 770-856-5149.



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